

# POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR INDEPENDENT OR GUIDED PRACTICE

## **Activity 1: Choose, Write and Build, and Mix, Fix, Mix K-2** (Fountas and Pinnell)

This activity helps spellers recognize common patterns.

- Teacher provides short, clear, focused spelling lesson on new sound or pattern.
- Teacher and students share several known words that use this principle or pattern. Teacher writes these words on the board.
- Each student chooses 3 or 4 of these words and writes them down for personal study.
- Students spell their words with letter manipulatives and checks their spelling against their written model.
- Student mixes the letters and respells the words using left to right sequence. Repeat 2 or 3 times.

## **Activity 2: Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check\*\* K-2** (adapted from Horn and Fountas and Pinnell) This activity teaches students how to study words using visual memory.

- Take a paper with 3-4 columns (attached) and write the list of words in the first column.
- Begin with one word. **Look** closely at the letters to notice the visual details.
- **Say** it, and notice parts to remember.
- **Cover** the word and think about how it looks.
- **Write** it from memory in the next column.
- Uncover and **check** it with the real word.
- Repeat until the last column is complete. If it is spelled wrong in the last column, add the word to the first column again and repeat the process.

The first two steps help students make the connection between the visual and sound patterns and also connect meaning to spelling. The third step guides students in seeing a word in their minds. The fourth step provides practice with retrieving the image and producing letter strings in correct sequence. The final steps allow students to monitor and, if necessary, immediately self-correct their spelling attempts.

## **Activity 3: Buddy Check\*\*** (Fountas and Pinnell) may be used as a pretest and teaches students how to rehearse for spelling test

- Students work together dictating their words to each other on their Buddy Check sheets.
- Partner says word, uses it in sentence, and says word again.
- Buddy records word.
- When all words are recorded, dictating partner puts an “x” beside misspelled words.
- Repeat for buddy.
- Words that are misspelled in the last column on the sheet are made with letter manipulatives.
- Misspelled words are then carried over to next weeks list.

## **Activity 4: Make Connections\*\*** (Fountas and Pinnell) Making Connections provides for an open-ended task that engages students in thinking about how words are related.

- Students write words at the top of the sheet (attached).
  - Teacher shows students different ways to make connections between words.
  - Students select a word part connection and records it in box.
  - Students select a personal connection and records it in box.
- This task requires much teaching over a long period of time and needs to be adjusted to fit the grade and achievement level of particular students.

## **Activity 5: Making Words\*\*** (Cunningham) Making words with letter cards is an active way for students to study spelling patterns. Students use specific letters and proceed through a series of steps to make bigger words until they make the target word the teacher has selected. For example, student might be given the vowels, *a, e, a*, and the consonants, *b, f, k, r, s, t*. The teacher could ask them to use three letters to make the word *bat* and then have them add, exchange, and remove letters to create a series of one and two syllable words. In the last step, students would use all of the letters to make the large word, *breakfast*. Students would record all of the words they make and then do a word sort, grouping the words by sound and/or visual pattern.

\*\* See attached worksheet

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## **Activity 6: Word Sorting** (Hall, Cunningham, and Cunningham)

Sorting words by pattern enables students to see similarities and differences among words and to discover important concepts. Word sorting activities are an integral part of spelling instruction. In word sorting, students look at words and sort them into categories based on sound and spelling patterns. Research had found that word sorting activities not only increase students' ability to spell words, but to read them as well

There are four basic types of word sorts:

- **Closed Sort:** The teacher asks students to group a set of words by a pattern or principle. (e.g. Group all the words by soft and hard g. Group all the words with a changed base word.)
- **Open Sort:** Given a set of words, students discover a common pattern or principle and group the words accordingly.
- **Writing Sort:** Students are given a sheet with model key words at the top. Teacher calls out a word and students write the word under the appropriate key word.
- **Speed Sort:** Students try to sort a set of words against the clock.

### **To prepare a word sort:**

- Select words which represent the spelling pattern or principle that is being reinforced (e.g. ee words)
- Select a contrasting set of words (e.g. short e words)
- Mix the groups of words on paper or on individual cards
- Ask individuals or partners sort the words
- Discuss the groupings at the end of the lesson.

## **Activity 7: Word Hunts**

In word hunts, students search environmental print (word walls, class lists, signs, books etc.) and "hunt" through their reading and writing for words that are examples of patterns they are studying. In this way, they see the connection between spelling and reading and writing. Word hunts also enhance students' speaking and writing vocabularies.

## **Activity 8: Word Study Journals (Notebooks)**

Spelling journals are organized collections of personal words students use in word sorts and games. Words are selected based on need or interest, and recorded in the journal.

As part of daily practice, students use the notebooks to:

- record word sorts
- write perceptions and generalizations about sort concepts
- draw and label words that match the key words
- drop and add letters to make new words
- write sentences, paragraphs, stories using the words they are studying
- do word hunts in trade books and content area reading
- write tips for remembering hard-to-spell words (e.g. **to get her**)
- play a variety of activities and word games with partners

## **Activity 9: Cloze (Rebecca Sitton)**

Make Cloze activities for practice and assessment. These may be stories or expository writing, and are written on black line masters. Selected "test" words are left blank for students to fill in as they read.

A cloze activity may also provide practice for missing letters of words e.g. p \_ \_ ple, b \_ \_ \_ tif \_ l.

## **Activity 10: Dictation (CORE Teaching Reading Sourcebook)**

Dictation activities connect the encoding process (writing) to the decoding process (reading) by demonstrating that students not only use sound/spelling knowledge to read, but the same knowledge allows them to communicate with others through writing. Regular dictation of words containing patterns taught in phonics lessons is a useful way to assess student progress. If the length of dictation increases gradually, it also develops students' auditory skills. Dictation progresses from two or three word sentences to progressively longer sentences. These sentences should contain previously taught sound/spellings, as well as some previously taught priority words.